

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 01537 162129Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USSS-00 /026 W
-----162135Z 068946 /72-70

O 162102Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9934

S E C R E T BOGOTA 01537

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, CASC, CO
SUBJECT: KIDNAPPING OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER : SITREP 7

1. COL URIBE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE HAS FURTHER INFORMED US THAT COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE IS PARTICIPATING IN THE SEARCH FOR THE FARC UNIT THAT KIDNAPPED STARR. HE COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE THOUGHT THIS EFFORT WAS PROBABLY FUTILE SINCE SINGLE AND DOUBLE CANOPY TYPE OF VEGETATION IN THE AREA PREVENTS EFFECTIVE AERIAL OBSERVATION OF FOOT TRAILS. HE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN THE FARC UNIT ONLY ABOUT THREE HOURS TO MARCH FROM THE SCENE OF THE ATTACK AT LA MACARENA TO THIS JUNGLE-LIKE TERRAIN.

2. COL. URIBE, KNOWING OF STARR'S POOR HEALTH, ASKED IF WE COULD FIND OUT WHAT SPECIAL MEDICATIMNS, IF ANY, STARR NEEDED. HE SAID THE ARMY WOULD ENDEAVOR TO HAVE SUCH MEDICINES AVAILABLE AT MILITARY POSTS IN THE GENERAL REGION IN CASE STARR WERE SUDDENLY RELEASED. URIBE ALSO EXPRESSED PERSONAL OPINION THAT FARC IS USUALLY VERY SOLICITOUS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THEIR NOTEWORTHY CAPTIVES, AND THAT MOST FARC GROUPINGS INCLUDE MEDICALLY-TRAINED PERSONNEL AND EVEN DOCTORS. EMBASSY COMMENT: UNFORTUNATELY THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY. HONORARY DUTCH CONSUL LEUPIN WHO WAS HELD BY FARC FOR ABOUT A YEAR SAID IN DEBRIEFING AFTER HIS RELEASE THAT GUERRILLAS WERE LIMITED TO SIMPLE DRUGS LIKE ASPIRIN AND THAT ONE GUERRILLA DIED IN THE CAMP BECAUSE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BOGOTA 01537 162129Z

OF LACK OF MEDICAL ATTENTION.

3. WE HAVE BEEN ABLE AGAIN TO REACH VILLAVICENCIO BY PHONE AND POLICE THERE ARE HELPING TO SET UP A PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN US AND THE COLOMBIAN JUDGE WHO WITNESSED THE ATTACK AND KIDNAPPING. MEANWHILE, POLICE COLONEL IN CHARGE IN VILLAVICENCIO INFORMED US HE HAD LEARNED ON RELIABLE AUTHORITY THAT AFTER STARR

TOLD THE FARC THAT THE EMBASSY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIM, A MEMBER
OF THE FARC GROUP EXCLAIMED "HE'S GOOD FOR US."
SANCHEZ

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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